

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1 - 83 (cancelled)

Claim 84 (previously presented): A method for flexible and secure transmission of digital content to a first end user device and a second end user device, the method comprising:

- providing a control center for controlling access to the digital content by the first end user device and the second end user device;

- transmitting scrambled digital content to the second end user device by the first end user device, such that said second end user device cannot play back said scrambled digital content;

- connecting said second end user device to said control center; and

- transmitting a permission message to said second end user device by said control center, such that said second end user device is able to unscramble said scrambled digital content to form unscrambled digital content,

- wherein the transmitted scrambled digital content comprises at least an embedded original entitlement control message (ECM) and playable content, the embedded original ECM controlling, at least in part, access to the scrambled digital content by the second end user device.

Claim 85 (previously presented): The method of claim 84, wherein transmitting said scrambled digital content includes:

- transmitting a first set of information for decoding said scrambled digital content to said second end user device; and

- permitting said second end user device to access said first set of information only if said permission message is given to said second end user device.

Claim 86 (previously presented): The method of claim 85, wherein said first set of information is distributed with said scrambled digital content.

Claim 87 (previously presented): The method of claim 85, wherein said first set of information is distributed by said control center.

Claim 88 (previously presented): The method of claim 85, wherein transmitting said scrambled digital content includes contacting said control center by said second end user device to receive said permission message.

Claim 89 (previously presented): The method of claim 85, wherein said first set of information includes an address of said control center.

Claim 90 (previously presented): The method of claim 85, wherein said first set of information enables said unscrambled digital content to be permanently stored by said second end user device.

Claim 91 (cancelled)

Claim 92 (previously presented): The method of claim 84, wherein said first and said second end user devices belong to a group of a plurality of end user devices, such that said permission message is sent to each end user device belonging to said group.

Claim 93 (previously presented): The method of claim 92, wherein membership in said group is at least partially determined according to communication between said end user devices.

Claim 94 (previously presented): The method of claim 93, wherein transmitting said permission message further comprises transmitting a token from said first end user device to said second end user device, for including said first and said second end user devices in said group.

Claim 95 (previously presented): The method of claim 94, wherein transmitting said token is performed repeatedly for the plurality of end user devices in the group until a limit is reached.

Claim 96 (previously presented): The method of claim 95, wherein said limit is determined according to a number of end user devices in the group, such that if said number of end user devices exceeds a maximum permitted number, transmitting said scrambled digital content and transmitting said permission message are not performed for an additional end user device.

Claim 97 (previously presented): The method of claim 96, wherein said limit is determined according to at least one reasonableness rule.

Claim 98 (previously presented): The method of claim 95, wherein said limit is determined according to at least one reasonableness rule and wherein said at least one reasonableness rule restricts a number of copies of said scrambled digital content operable with said token.

Claim 99 (previously presented): The method of claim 98, wherein when said limit is reached, at least one of transmitting said scrambled digital content and transmitting said permission message is not performed.

Claim 100 (previously presented): The method of claim 98, wherein said at least one reasonableness rule requires at least said first end user device to wait for a predetermined period before transferring said scrambled digital content to an additional end user device in the group.

Claim 101 (previously presented): The method of claim 98, wherein said at least one reasonableness rule requires said second end user device to wait for a predetermined period before transferring said scrambled digital content to an additional end user device in the group, said predetermined period being greater for said second end user device than for said first end user device.

Claim 102 (previously presented): The method of claim 101, wherein said predetermined period is at least partially determined according to a period of time.

Claim 103 (previously presented): The method of claim 101, wherein said predetermined period is at least partially determined according to operation of said end user device a minimum number of times.

Claim 104 (previously presented): The method of claim 92, wherein membership in said group is at least partially determined according to said control center, such that if said group has more than a predetermined number of end user devices as members, said control center blocks receipt of said permission message by members of said group.

Claim 105 (currently amended): A method for securing digital content for transmission to an end user device, comprising:

providing a control center for controlling access to the digital content by the end user device;

transmitting from said control center to said end user device an entitlement message (EMM);

transmitting scrambled digital content to the end user device, the scrambled digital content comprising at least an ~~embedded~~ original entitlement control message (ECM) and playable content, the ~~embedded~~ original ECM controlling, at least in part, access to the scrambled digital content, said ECM and said EMM together ~~[[not]]~~ being sufficient to enable said end user device to play back said scrambled digital content;

transmitting a PECM (personal ECM) to the end user device by said control center, said PECM being specific to the end user device, said ~~ECM and said EMM and said PECM together~~ being sufficient to enable said end user device to play back said scrambled digital content without either said original ECM or said EMM being necessary; and

unscrambling said scrambled digital content by the end user device by employing said PECM,

wherein said original ECM is broadcast to a multiplicity of end user devices comprising said first end user device, and

said PECM is distributed individually to said first end user device, and
said ECM is valid for a limited period of time and said PECM is more
permanently valid than said ECM.

Claim 106 (previously presented): The method of claim 105, wherein transmitting said PECM further comprises:

transmitting a first set of information in an ECM (entitlement control message) for decoding said scrambled digital content to the end user device;

permitting the end user device to access said first set of information only if an entitlement management message (EMM) is given to the end user device and said EMM indicates that the end user device is permitted to use said ECM; and

unscrambling said scrambled digital content by the end user device according to said first set of information.

Claim 107 (previously presented): The method of claim 106, wherein said EMM is transmitted by said control center.

Claim 108 (previously presented): The method of claim 106, further comprising:

replacing said ECM with said PECM for unscrambling said scrambled digital content by the end user device.

Claim 109 (previously presented): The method of claim 106, wherein said first set of information includes at least one instruction for generating a code word, such that permitting the end user device to access said first set of information includes:

generating said code word according to said at least one instruction;
and

unscrambling said scrambled digital content according to said code word.

Claim 110 (previously presented): The method of claim 105, further comprising:
permanently associating said PECM with said scrambled digital content to permit unscrambling of said scrambled digital content by the end user device.

Claim 111 (previously presented): The method of claim 110, further comprising:
transmitting said scrambled digital content with said ECM from a first end user device to a second end user device;
receiving a specific PECM by said second end user device from said control center; and
unscrambling said scrambled digital content by said second end user device only after receiving said specific PECM.

Claim 112 (previously presented): The method of claim 111, wherein receiving said specific PECM by said second end user device includes:
transmitting payment to said control center; and
transmitting said PECM by said control center only after receiving payment.

Claims 113 - 123 (cancelled)

Claim 124 (previously presented): A method for secure distribution of digital content between end user devices, comprising:

receiving scrambled digital content by a first end user device, the scrambled digital content comprising at least an entitlement control message (ECM) and playable content;

receiving a permission message for unscrambling said scrambled digital content by said first end user device, the permission message comprising an entitlement to unscramble the scrambled digital content according to the ECM;

transferring said scrambled digital content and the ECM directly from said first end user device to a second end user device; and

unscrambling said scrambled digital content by said second end user device according to the ECM only after said permission message is activated for said second end user device.

Claim 125 (previously presented): The method of claim 124, wherein at least said second end user device is in communication with a control center and said permission message is activated for said second end user device by said control center.

Claim 126 (previously presented): The method of claim 124, wherein said first and said second end user devices belong to a group of a plurality of end user devices, such that said permission message is sent to each end user device belonging to said group.

Claim 127 (previously presented): The method of claim 126, wherein membership in said group is at least partially determined according to communication between said end user devices.

Claim 128 (previously presented): The method of claim 127, wherein receiving said permission message further comprises transmitting a token from said first end user device to said second end user device, for including said first and said second end user devices in said group.

Claim 129 (previously presented): The method of claim 128, wherein transmitting said token is performed repeatedly for the plurality of end user devices in the group until a limit is reached.

Claim 130 (previously presented): The method of claim 129, wherein said limit is determined according to a number of end user devices in the group, such that if said number of end user devices exceeds a maximum permitted number, receiving and transferring are not performed for an additional end user device.

Claim 131 (previously presented): The method of claim 130, wherein said limit is determined according to at least one reasonableness rule.

Claim 132 (previously presented): The method of claim 129, wherein said limit is determined according to at least one reasonableness rule and wherein said at least one reasonableness rule restricts a number of copies of said scrambled digital content operable with said PECM.

Claim 133 (previously presented): The method of claim 132, wherein when said limit is reached, at least one of receiving and transferring is not performed.

Claim 134 (previously presented): The method of claim 132, wherein said at least one reasonableness rule requires at least said first end user device to wait for a predetermined period before transferring said scrambled digital content to an additional end user device in the group.

Claim 135 (previously presented): The method of claim 132, wherein said at least one reasonableness rule requires said second end user device to wait for a predetermined period before transferring said scrambled digital content to an additional end user device in the group, said predetermined period being greater for said second end user device than for said first end user device.

Claim 136 (previously presented): The method of claim 135, wherein said predetermined period is at least partially determined according to a period of time.

Claim 137 (previously presented): The method of claim 135, wherein said predetermined period is at least partially determined according to operation of said end user device a minimum number of times.

Claim 138 (previously presented): The method of claim 125, wherein membership in a group of a plurality of end user devices is at least partially determined according to said control center, such that if said group has more than a predetermined number of end user devices as members, said control center blocks receipt of said permission message by members of said group.

Claim 139 (previously presented): The method of claim 124, wherein unscrambling comprises:

- purchasing the digital content; and
- activating said permission message for said second end user device.

Claim 140 (previously presented): The method of claim 124, wherein said permission message is operative only by said first end user device, such that if said permission message is transferred to said second end user device by said first end user device, said permission message cannot be used by said second end user device.

Claims 141 - 165 (cancelled)

Claim 166 (previously presented) The method according to claim 84 and wherein the ECM remains embedded in the digital content after the receipt of a personal ECM (PECM) at the second end user device.

Claim 167 (previously presented) The method according claim 84 and wherein the ECM comprises an address for a network control center, the network control center being the network control center the second end user device must contact in order to receive a permission message to unscramble the scrambled digital content.

Claim 168 (previously presented) The method according to claim 167 and wherein the permission message comprises a PECM (personalized ECM).

Claim 169 (previously presented) The method according claim 84 and wherein the ECM comprises at least:

- an indication that the scrambled digital content comprises purchasable content;
- a unique identifier for the scrambled digital content; and
- a conditional access service identifier for a group which is allowed to purchase the scrambled digital content.

Claim 170 (previously presented) The method according to claim 169 and wherein the ECM further comprises at least one of:

- a base price for the scrambled digital content;
- an indication of rental duration for the digital content;
- a price for extending rental duration;
- an indication of a number of renderings of the digital content;

and

- a price for outright ownership of the digital content.

Claim 171 (previously presented) The method according to claim 105 and wherein the ECM remains embedded in the digital content after the receipt of the PECM at the end user device.

Claim 172 (previously presented) The method according claim 105 and wherein the ECM comprises an address for a network control center, the network control center being the network control center the end user device must contact in order to receive a permission message to unscramble the scrambled digital content.

Claim 173 (previously presented) The method according to claim 172 and wherein the permission message comprises a PECM (personalized ECM).

Claim 174 (previously presented) The method according claim 105 and wherein the ECM comprises at least:

- an indication that the scrambled digital content comprises purchasable content;
- a unique identifier for the scrambled digital content; and
- a conditional access service identifier for a group which is allowed to purchase the scrambled digital content.

Claim 175 (previously presented) The method according to claim 174 and wherein the ECM further comprises at least one of:

- a base price for the scrambled digital content;
- an indication of rental duration for the digital content;
- a price for extending rental duration;
- an indication of a number of renderings of the digital content;

and

- a price for outright ownership of the digital content.

Claim 176 (previously presented) The method according to claim 124 and wherein the ECM remains embedded in the digital content after the receipt of a personal ECM (PECM) at the second end user device.

Claim 177 (previously presented) The method according claim 124 and wherein the ECM comprises an address for a network control center, the network control center being the network control center the second end user device must contact in order to receive a permission message to unscramble the scrambled digital content.

Claim 178 (previously presented) The method according to claim 177 and wherein the permission message comprises a PECM (personalized ECM).

Claim 179 (previously presented) The method according claim 124 and wherein the ECM comprises at least:

- an indication that the scrambled digital content comprises purchasable content;
- a unique identifier for the scrambled digital content; and
- a conditional access service identifier for a group which is allowed to purchase the scrambled digital content.

Claim 180 (previously presented) The method according to claim 179 and wherein the ECM further comprises at least one of:

- a base price for the scrambled digital content;
- an indication of rental duration for the digital content;
- a price for extending rental duration;
- an indication of a number of renderings of the digital content;

and

- a price for outright ownership of the digital content.

Claims 181 - 186 (cancelled)

Claim 187 (new): The method according to claim 105 and wherein said PECM replaces said ECM.

Claim 188 (new): The method according to claim 105 and wherein said original ECM and said EMM together are sufficient for generating a key for decrypting said scrambled digital content.